



Australian Bureau of Statistics

6310.0 - Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership, Australia, August 2011 Quality Declaration

ARCHIVED ISSUE Released at 11:30 AM (CANBERRA TIME) 27/04/2012

MEDIA RELEASE

27 April 2012

Embargoed: 11.30 am (Canberra time)

58/2012

Trade union membership remains steady

The proportion of employees who were trade union members in their main job remained steady at 18% in August 2011, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

This represents 1.8 million persons who were trade union members in their main job, which is an increase of 46,900 persons from the previous year.

The proportion of public sector employees who were trade union members in their main job was 41% in August 2010 and 43% in August 2011. The proportion of private sector employees who were trade union members in their main job was 13%.

Two thirds of trade union members (66%) had been a trade union member for 5 years or more, compared with 11% who had been a trade union member for less than 1 year.

There were 1.5 million employees who were not currently members of a trade union, although they had been previously. Of these, 77% hadn't been a trade union member for 5 years or more, while 4% had been members of a trade union less than 1 year ago. A further 6.6 million (66%) employees had never been a trade union member.

Other findings on trade union membership include:

- The industry with the highest proportion of male employees who were trade union members was Public Administration and Safety (38%), while for female employees it was Education and Training (40%), and
- The occupation with the highest proportion of male employees who were trade union members was Machinery Operators and Drivers (29%), while for female employees it was Professionals (33%).

An article 'Decline in trade union membership' has been prepared looking at trade union membership from 1992 to 2011, showing the general decline in trade union membership.

More details are available in *Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership, Australia, August 2011* (cat. no. 6310.0).

Media note:

When reporting ABS data the Australian Bureau of Statistics (or ABS) must be attributed as the source.

This page last updated 16 May 2013

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